

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

THE NAME OF THE ROYAL PALM.

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A Bartramian name, whose validity has hitherto curiously escaped the notice of both Dr. Merrill (*Bartonia* 23, 1945) and myself, is *Palma elata*. It occurs at three places in the text of William Bartram's *Travels* (1791: 90, 94, 141), in each case without a validating description, and without a reference to the description on pages 115-116, which reads:

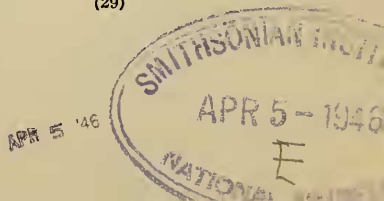
'The Palm trees here seem to be of a different species from the Cabbage tree; their strait trunks are sixty, eighty or ninety feet high, with a beautiful taper of a bright ash colour, until within six or seven feet of the top, where it is a fine green colour, crowned with an orb of rich green plumed leaves: I have measured the stem of these plumes fifteen feet in length, besides the plume, which is nearly of the same length.'

Since this description does not include any technical name, it did not seem possible to connect it definitely with the *Palma elata* referred to above. However, there is one other occurrence of the technical name in an easily overlooked place—page iv of the Contents (part II, chapter V): 'description of the Palma Elate'¹ (misprint, corrected to 'Palma Elata' in the London edition (1794: iv) and perhaps other editions). This unmistakable reference to the description on pages 115-116 validates the name.

This belated resurrection of Bartram's name apparently throws into synonymy *Oreodoxa regia* H. B. K. (*Nov. Gen. et Spec. Plantarum* 1: 305, (1815) 1816), later transferred to *Roystonea* as *R. regia* (H. B. K.) O.F. Cook (*Science* 12 (300): 479, 1900). Subsequently the last-mentioned author (*Bull. Torrey Bot. Club* 28 (10): 554, 1901) distinguished the Florida tree under the name of *Roystonea floridana*, leaving the name *regia* for the Cuban tree; but this distinction has not been recognized by such recent authorities as Small and Bailey.

The name of the royal palm now becomes *Roystonea elata* (Bartr.),

¹ The Linnaean genus *Elate* (1753), based upon an Indian palm, evidently requires no consideration in the present connection.



comb. nov. The original reference is: *Palma Elate* (misprint for *elata*) Bartram, *Travels*: iv, 115-116, 1791. The type locality is the St. John's River between Astor and Lake Dexter, Lake and Volusia Counties, Florida. The species has long since disappeared from this part of Florida.

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